

april 2008

## this issue

- Tourism ROI
- Tourism Conference
- In the News
- National Tourism Week
- Where's Scooter

*North Dakota*  
LEGENDARY

division of tourism

# commerce matters

## Tourism ROI is A-OK

Each \$1 returns  
\$123 in visitor  
expenditures

"Our efforts in aggressively marketing North Dakota as a great place to live, work and play are coming to fruition," Gov. John Hoeven said at a recent news conference to present results of North Dakota Tourism's return on investment study.

"Businesses statewide are seeing real benefits from our efforts to establish North Dakota as a premier travel destination. Tourism now accounts for \$3.8 billion in visitor spending, according to NDSU," Hoeven added.

Promoting travel to North Dakota is a great investment. This is the message North Dakota Tourism has been sharing since 2002, when the division first commissioned return on investment (ROI) advertising effectiveness research.

The ROI reports show that every dollar invested in North Dakota tourism creates a return in visitor spending. The research has been a powerful tool in strategically identifying target markets, media and effective advertising components.

Last year, the \$1.66-million tourism advertising investment brought \$203.9 million in visitor spending to the state, according to research by Longwoods International, a leading travel industry research company.

"This is a fact that every tourism partner in the state should be using," said Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman. "Each dollar spent on paid



North Dakota Governor John Hoeven and Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman unveil Tourism's return on investment report to the media at the State Capitol. The report indicated Tourism's marketing efforts were sound and the return on its investment was strong. The 2008 creative campaign also was unveiled.

media last year returned \$123."

The growth in advertising effectiveness, visitor spending and overall visits to the state are supported through additional visitation research. According to NDSU, total out-of-state visitor expenditures now amount to \$3.8 billion annually, keeping tourism as North Dakota's second-largest industry.

Find Tourism's research at <https://www.ndtourism.com/industry/research/>. The full 2007 ROI press release is also online at <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=236>. ●



The third keynote speaker of the 2008 Tourism Conference is Garrison Wynn, president of Wynn Solutions. His session, "Making the Most of Difficult Situations, Changing Markets, Changing Times" examines the challenges we face and provides no-cost, easily implemented, proven solutions. For more on the conference, see Page 3.

## Tourism Congress helps set priorities

About 400 individuals participated in eight regional Tourism Congress meetings around North Dakota in March. Tourism stakeholders and policymakers were asked to identify the top challenges facing the tourism industry in North Dakota and to develop initiatives to help overcome the challenges. Each participant then voted to express his or her opinion on which were the most promising initiatives.

Bill Shalhoob, Tourism Alliance Partnership (TAP) chairman, attended all eight meetings. "The meetings were highly informative as we heard about common issues and new initiatives," he said. "I was impressed by the enthusiasm of participants and the out-of-the-box ideas that were brought up at each location. When we complete the process, the industry will have a great blueprint for the immediate and long-term future."

North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman said attending each meeting was a great learning experience. "Each location had some similar and some unique challenges," she noted. "The hardest part for me was not having the time to talk about what we are currently doing in many of these areas, but that also will give us an opportunity to take a fresh look at our challenges and re-evaluate how we can best position tourism for continued growth."

TAP Executive Director Dana Bohn facilitated the meetings and is currently working with staff to prepare a report, which includes the top vote-getters, for presentation at the North Dakota Tourism Conference in Mandan, April 20-22. The complete list includes more than 130 challenges and 60 initiatives to address the challenges. Marketing was by far the greatest challenge category, and a majority of the initiatives focused on enhancing marketing efforts. Physical infrastructure and industry development were the next highest-ranking challenge categories, followed by human resources.

"We will give Tourism Conference attendees an opportunity to further develop and prioritize the initiatives, and from there will develop a strategic plan for implementation," Bohn said.

The Tourism Congress is a joint effort of TAP, the Destination Marketing Association of North Dakota and the North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division. ●

Dana Bohn, TAP Executive Director, facilitated the Tourism Congress meetings throughout the state.



## In the News

(Go to the links below each item for a complete news release)



### North Dakota Tourism was in the news in March

**March 5, 6, 11, 12:** Area tourism stakeholders gathered to develop initiatives for advancing the industry during Tourism Congress regional meetings. The Tourism Congress was coordinated by the North Dakota Tourism Alliance Partnership (TAP), the Destination Marketing Association of North Dakota (DMAND) and the North Dakota Department of Commerce Tourism Division. Eight regional meetings were held throughout the state March 4-6 and 11-12. Stakeholders discussed tourism's economic impact, identified industry challenges, developed strategies for growth and prioritized actions for the 2009 Legislative Session. <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=226>

**March 10:** North Dakota Tourism received three awards at the Bismarck-Mandan Advertising Federation (AdFed) Awards on February 23 and two at the Advertising Federation of Fargo-Moorhead ADDY Awards Night and Gala on February 29. In Bismarck, gold awards went to "2007 Travel Guide" and "Tourism International Video/DVD." The Silver ADDY was awarded for the "Legendary-newspaper insert." In Fargo, a gold went to the television ad "Wake Up" and a silver to the "2007 television campaign". <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=229>

**March 19:** North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman recently joined 35 state tourism directors at the National Council of State Tourism Directors Spring Forum in Washington, D.C. <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=235>

**March 25:** A \$1.66-million investment in North Dakota tourism advertising brought \$203.9 million in visitor spending to the state in 2007, according to research by Longwoods International, a leading travel industry market research company. <http://www.ndtourism.com/smartmail/news-releases/detail.asp?newsID=236> ●

## ND Tourism Conference

The 2008 North Dakota Tourism Conference is only weeks away! Governor John Hoeven will be attending, presenting the 2008 Governor's Awards for Tourism, along with Department of Commerce Commissioner Shane Goettle.

The theme of this year's conference, "The Tourism Puzzle: What's Your Piece," hints at the variety of information to be offered, including technology, hospitality, research, group-travel, branding and much more.

The conference is at the Seven Seas in Mandan April 20-22.

### Registration

Online registration for the annual conference can be accessed at <https://registration.ndtourism.com/details.asp?ID=37>.

Registration is \$135 per participant. Checks can also be made payable to DMAND and sent to 2008 NDTC, Bismarck-Mandan CVB, 1600 Burnt Boat Drive, Bismarck, ND 58503.

### Awards

Nominations for the 2008 Governor's Awards for Tourism must be submitted **ASAP**. Online nominations can be submitted at <https://registration.ndtourism.com/details.asp?ID=38>. Questions can be handled by Fred Walker at 701-328-3502; [fwalker@nd.gov](mailto:fwalker@nd.gov).

### Scholarships

The Destination Marketing Association of North Dakota (DMAND) has scholarships available to cover the registration cost of the conference. The deadline for scholarship applications is April 4. The online application can be filled out at <https://registration.ndtourism.com/details.asp?ID=43>. ●

## Prepare for National Tourism Week

Join hundreds of cities, states and businesses nationwide in an annual salute to tourism, May 10-18. The national theme for Tourism Week is "Discover Great American Traditions."

State plans to honor National Tourism Week include a Governor's proclamation of "North Dakota Tourism Week."

News releases will be sent to statewide media citing the strength of the state's tourism industry. The week will also kick-off the annual Governor's North Dakota Photo Contest.

North Dakota Tourism has free resources available to travel partners including:

- A handout with valuable tourism facts and figures
- A powerpoint which can be used in local presentations
- Industry research

For copies of the handout and/or presentation, contact Heather LeMoine at (701) 328-5372; [hlemoine@nd.gov](mailto:hlemoine@nd.gov). For industry research, visit <https://www.ndtourism.com/industry/research/>.

In keeping with the national theme, Great North Dakota Traditions may be the perfect spin to promote your attraction, destination and/or local tourism industry. Here are some ways how:

- Speak to service clubs about the importance of tourism
- Write an op/ed piece for a local newspaper
- Conduct media interviews
- Distribute travel guides and brochures to major businesses, hotels and visitor stops
- Send out your own press release

The Travel Industry Association (TIA) Web site has media relations tips available. Go to [http://www.tia.org/pressmedia/TWFA/media\\_tips.html](http://www.tia.org/pressmedia/TWFA/media_tips.html) and start planning your local efforts.

There are also some important things to do in preparation for seasonal openings, including:

- Clearing away garbage
- Making sure signs are easily visible and understandable
- Updating your Web site and free listings on [www.ndtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com)
- Hospitality training/tips for front-line staff

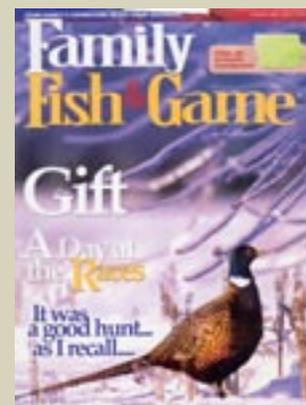
Look at your destination with visitor eyes, and continue the North Dakota tradition of great hospitality and service. ●

## The Press Run: Featuring North Dakota

North Dakota in the news: First quarter 2008



- ❑ Snowgoer Magazine, January: Snowmobile Splendor
- ❑ Midwest Living, January-February: Event features
- ❑ Family Fish and Game, January: Memories Frozen in Time
- ❑ Midwest Living, March-April: Celebrations
- ❑ Field and Stream, February 2008: Upland, Inc.
- ❑ Outdoor Life, March 2008: Bismarck No. 10 for outdoorsmen
- ❑ Bike, Special Edition, March 2008: Pros Pick Maah Daah Hey
- ❑ Preservations, March-April: Getting Away, Going Home
- ❑ True West, March: Northern Pacific, St. Paul to Vancouver; Louis L'Amour
- ❑ Outdoors Unlimited, February: Hidden Treasures in Bismarck ●



### Writers workshop a hit

North Dakota Tourism Public and Media Relations Director Kim Schmidt hosted her second freelance writers workshop recently in Jamestown.



North Dakota Tourism Public and Media Relations Director Kim Schmidt visits with freelance writers.

A number of writers from across the state met with Hannah Agran, assistant travel editor from Midwest Living Magazine, as she presented new ideas and tips for writers, along with materials to enhance writing skills.

“This workshop is a terrific opportunity to share our media efforts with freelancers and provide them new

North Dakota story ideas.” Schmidt said.

Freelance writer Jennifer Haaland found the workshop useful.

“I love freelancing because I get to discover new people and hear the most unexpected yarns,” Haaland said. “It’s not, however, a job that lets me visit with other writers or talk shop very often. The compilation of material from Tourism is exactly the kind of information I need at my fingertips, but often don’t have the time to research. I’m already looking forward to next year’s get together.” ●

### E-marketing program explodes

Last July, North Dakota Tourism launched a new, E-marketing program offering visitors to the state Web site an opportunity to sign-up for updates and ongoing information in areas of their choice.

In just eight short months, more than 10,800 have registered to receive North Dakota news in 15 fun categories.

“The explosion of interest we’re seeing from visitors to our

Web site reaffirms research showing the domestic and international appeal North Dakota has,” said Heather LeMoine, tourism marketing director.

North Dakota Tourism gathers content for the E-blasts, or E-marketing newsletters, via travel partner press releases, events and other news posted via partner access to [www.ndtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com).

“This is another vital reason for tourism partners to be using free partner access,” LeMoine added. “We continually use that information, putting it out in front of potential visitors.”

Go online to <http://www.ndtourism.com/mms/sign-up.asp>. ●

### Record-breaking year for U.S. visitation

Overall figures from the U.S. Department of Commerce for 2007 reflect a worldwide increase of 11.1 percent over last year, following a sharp upturn in the fourth quarter more than 15% ahead of the same period in 2006. For the month of December, arrivals were up 14%.

Germany, the No. 2 market in Europe-USA, did a little better than the UK, up 10% for the year and 14.8% in the fourth quarter. But – as in 2006 – it was smaller Western European economies that had the most profound growth this year in USA travel.

Sweden traffic to the USA continued on its record pace, up almost 30% in December, and 23.7% in the fourth quarter, ending the year 18.0% over 2006. The 337,000-plus USA arrivals from Sweden in 2007 represent an almost one-third increase since 2004 and are a record for this country. ●

### DOT transportation survey

The North Dakota Department of Transportation is asking for assistance in identifying trends and needs of the state tourism industry and transportation system. To take the survey, click here [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gdX3a9Siu\\_2b3ZqNIH96dr8w\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=gdX3a9Siu_2b3ZqNIH96dr8w_3d_3d) or visit [www.dot.nd.gov](http://www.dot.nd.gov) and the link to the survey can be found on the right-hand side of the homepage. The survey is four questions and takes only a couple of minutes. ●

Take a refreshing open-air ride where you can get an up-close look at wildlife and plant life along the Missouri River.



### Where Am I?

Teresa Ham of Bismarck correctly placed me at the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Medora last month. This month, I’m taking a trip back in time on the rails. Where am I? Please E-mail your answers to [jpursley@nd.gov](mailto:jpursley@nd.gov) by April 23. In the event of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine who receives the North Dakota Legendary item. ●